

## Hope for the Discouraged and Depressed, Part 11 - Romans 8:33-34 – May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2012

- Today's teaching will be part 11 of a series I've titled; "Hope for the Discouraged and Depressed."

- If you were to ask me what I thought the greatest need in my Christian life is it has to be the absolute certainty and security of God's love for me.  
- There are a number of things that cause one to become discouraged and depressed, but chief amongst them is a doubt that leads to insecurity.  
- When I have doubts about God's love for me, it will foster insecurity within me, and the problem is that Satan knows this, and Satan exploits this.

- Let me explain, Satan is all about accusing us, confusing us, and lying to us, and his sole goal is to condemn us, so as to separate us from God.  
- The litmus test for discerning this comes by way of distinguishing between condemnation and conviction, in that Satan condemns, God convicts.  
- This is how I'm able to know which it is the condemnation of Satan will separate me from God while the conviction of the Spirit draws me to God.

- This explains why it is, and even how it is, that Satan is met with success in the life of a believer. Actually, in some ways we are complicit in it.  
- By that I mean, we give the Devil permission to do this to us, and supremely it is in two areas that we sort of give him a blank check, if you will.  
- The first is our struggles with sin, and the second is our pressures from suffering, and Satan just fills in the amount of condemnation and doubt.

- Enter the Apostle Paul and the text before us. Commencing in verse 33 and to the end of the chapter all condemnation and doubt is dismantled.  
- There is now no need to ever doubt God's love when I'm suffering, nor is there any need to be crushed under condemnation when I'm sinning.  
- That's not to say that I'm out from under the heavy hand of conviction, rather, it's that I'm out from under the crushing weight of condemnation.

- I don't think that the importance of this could ever be overstated, because Satan uses both doubt and condemnation to separate us from God.  
- I'm of the belief that it's for this reason we have, what we have, recorded for us here in this chapter. It's to assure us of the love God has for us.  
- I'll take it a step further and suggest that this love is not only unfailing, it's unbreakable, and it's not based on what we are, but on Who He is.

As one commentator so aptly put it; "The overall aim of Romans 8 must be to promote a proper, cross-based, Spirit-given, assurance for the believer who struggles with sin (Romans 7:14-25) and with suffering (Romans 8:17:39). Both failure with sin and pressures from suffering unsettle us deeply, and the only remedy is to know with equal depth the unbreakable love of God for us in Jesus."

- This unbreakable love of God for us is reinforced, and secured, when Paul asks, what I like to call, the big three who questions in verses 33-35.  
- In both asking then answering these three who questions, the Apostle seals the deal, as it were, related to how this love is based on Who He is.  
- Now, I can be secure in what I am by virtue of Who He is how He is and perhaps even more importantly what He's done as Who and how He is.

### **1. Hope returns to me knowing He is eternally justifying of me (Verse 33)**

(33) Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.

-v33 The Apostle Paul rhetorically asks then emphatically answers the question of who'll bring any charge against those whom God has chosen.  
- The answer, no one dare, by virtue of the fact that it is God Who justifies me and if it's God Who has justified me then it's just if I'd never sinned.  
- If it's just if I'd never sinned, then who would even dare to bring a charge against me as the one who has been the recipient of this justification?

- This is interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is, it completely guts out everything, and everyone who tries to bring me down.  
- If the truth be known, this is one of the main reasons we lose hope and become discouraged, even depressed, in our walk with Jesus Christ.  
- Here's how I get there, the guilt of my past sins can both haunt me, and taunt me, with the threat that those charges can be brought against me.

- This is what I mean by Satan exploiting this one thing. Again, he is a very intelligent created being, and he knows that this is the deciding factor.  
- He knows that when he's successful in getting us to cower and falter under the crushing weight of his condemnation we'll doubt the love of God.  
- What comes packaged with doubting God's love is questioning God's goodness. This is the very lethal combination that I call the demonic duo.

- Here's the bottom line, if I'm walking in the justification that comes vis-à-vis my salvation, then there can never be present any condemnation.  
- Thus, if there's no condemnation, then there can certainly be no charges brought against me from my past, because I'm secure in the present.  
- This brings us to our second hope found in verse thirty-four, where the Apostle Paul is about to drive the last nail in the coffin of condemnation.

### **2. Hope returns to me knowing He is always interceding for me (Verse 34)**

(34) Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

-v34 Paul asks who is he that condemns then says Jesus He who died and rose to life is seated at the right hand of God and is interceding for us.  
- Do you realize what the implications of this are? This means that the one Who died for us, is seated at the right hand of God praying for us.  
- I am greatly encouraged, and am given much hope knowing that you pray for me, but nothing personal, I like knowing Jesus prays for me more.

- Here's what I'm thinking, my past sins against God have been forgiven and cleansed, so I am now justified, but what about my present sins?  
- Well, that's why we have verse thirty-four in our Bibles, Jesus is interceding for us while seated at the right hand of the Father, in the present.  
- At the risk of sounding silly when I say this, you'll notice that Jesus is not pacing back and forth worrying about us at the right hand of the father.

- This picture of Jesus sitting at the right hand of God, carry's with it the idea of His work being finished, the jury is no longer out, the verdict is in.  
- I am not guilty of breaking God's law, because Jesus Christ fulfilled the law in my stead when His blood was shed, but we still have a problem.  
- The problem is that our adversary stalks us and waits for the optimum time to attack us, and his strategy is to destroy us, and totally devour us.

**1 Peter 5:8 NIV** Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

- We have examples of this replete throughout the pages of Holy Writ chief amongst them being how the Amalekites would attack the Israelites.  
- What's so interesting about this, and it's germane to our understanding of interceding, is that they attacked the weak and the weary from behind.  
- Amalek is a type of the flesh and we are in a spiritual war, as Amalek, the grandson of Esau, warred against Jacob, who is a type of the spirit.

**Galatians 5:17 NKJV** For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.

- Now, here's where I'm going with all this, just as Amalek would meet them on the way and attack, the enemy will also attack us the same way.
- Please know that he can't so much as touch one hair on our head, unless he has permission to do so, and if so, it always fulfills God's purpose.
- Peter is a good example of this, when Satan asks for permission to sift him as wheat, but, ultimately, Peter is told that Jesus is praying for him.

**Luke 22:31-34 NIV** "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. (32) But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers." (33) But he replied, "Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death." (34) Jesus answered, "I tell you, Peter, before the rooster crows today, you will deny three times that you know me."

- The reason I bring Peter into the teaching is that it speaks to how like with Amalek the enemy attacks when we've failed or are tired and weary.
- However, I can have hope knowing Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father, interceding on my behalf in those present spiritual battles.
- The Lord knows that we're all prone to lose hope when in those spiritual battles, and that we're more susceptible to depression because of it.